a short period of time and that the message would reach the addressee. But, unfortunately, these days just the reverse is happening. A telegram either does not reach its destination or reaches its destination very late. I have some personal knowledge about a number of telegrams which have not reached their destinations at all. For instance, my brother-in-law died in the early hours of June 9, 1987 and a telegram which was sent the same day by his son to Banda to some of our close relatives did not reach there at all. Similarly, I have received a number of similar complaints from a number of persons. Thus a great inconvenience and hardship has been caused to the senders as well as to the addressees and the very purpose of sending the telegrams has been defeated.

Sir, our tale of woes does not end here. There are still a larger number of complaints about the very late delivery of telegrams. There are instances where telegrams have reached their destinations after ordinary letter, which too these days reach their destinations very late. This again has caused a great hardship and inconvenience to a large number of persons.

Therefore, I shall urge upon our dynamic and able Communication Minister and the Minister of State for Communications to take immediate steps to put an end to this highly deteriorating and deplorable state of affairs and see to it that telegrams do reach their destinations and are delivered expeditiously.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

I. Re. Setting up of a National equity Fund

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): Sir, I am happy to inform the House that the Government has now taken a decision to set up a National Equity Fund which would provide seed capital assistance to small entrepreneurs in the rural areas of the country as well as in urban areas with a population below 5 lakhs. The details of this Scheme have now been finalised and are being announced to-day by the Industarial Development Bank of India which will administer the Fund. To begin with the Fund will have a capital of Rs. 10 crores. Government of India is making a provision of Rs. 5 crores and the IDBI will be providing a matching contribution. The assistance under the Scheme will be available not only for establishing new projects but also for the purpose of rehabilitation of small viable sick units under the given criteria. I am sure that this Scheme will contribute to strengthening the policies of the Government for dispersal of industries and for encouraging the establishment of tiny and small industries by new entrepreneurs in our Smaller towns/villages and create new employment opportunities. Thus a long standing demand of cottage and small scale industries movement of the country is being fulfilled. Further steps will be taken to strengthen the scheme or augment the Fund as Table of this House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-4576/87].

II. Re. Progress achieved in the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement to establish peace and normaly in Sri Lanka signed in Colombo on July 29, 1987.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): Sir. On July 29, the Prime Minister signed a historic Agreement in Colombo with President Jayawardene of Shri Lanka to establish peace and normalcy in that country. Immediately after his re

[Shri K. Natwar Singh]

turn from Colombo, Prime Minister made statements in both the Houses of Parliament regarding this agreement and the text of the Agreement was laid on the Table of both Houses.

Both internationally and domestically the Agreement has been welcomed. World leaders have conveyed their admiration and praise for the courage, wisdom and statemanship shown by our Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayawardene. But there have been other voices, some openly sceptical while others almost hoping that the Agreement will not work, that it will break down at the stage of implementation. This is not surprising as there are many who do not wish to see peace and stability in our region. That is why Government would like to take the House into confidence about the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the Agreement.

As members are aware, the Agreement provides that the Sri Lanka Government may call upon the Indian Government to render military assistance to ensure the implementation of the Agreement. As Prime Minister informed the House on July 31, the Sri Lanka Government made a formal request for such assistance soon after the Agreement was signed on July 29. In keeping with our commitments under the Agreement, Indian troops landed in Jaffna on July 30 for assuming peace keeping functions and for helping in the implementation of the Agreement.

A ceasefire between the Sri Lankan security forces and the militants came into effect as the Indian troops landed. The ceasefire has held till now almost without any incident. For the first time in over four years, peace and tranquilty reign in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. Large numbers of people who had been rendered homeless and had been displaced from their areas of habitation have already started returning to their homes.

The next and perhaps the most crucial step was to persuade the militant groups, especially the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which is the largest and the most active group, to agree to abide by the peace accord and to lay down arms. This was the essential first step before the process of reconciliation and of healing the wounds of several years of ethnic conflict could begin. The militants and especially the LTTE had certain apprehensions and reservations, especially about their security. With the cooperation of President Jayewardene, we have been able to give them credible assurances which have removed these doubts.

I am glad to inform the House that the LTTE conveyed to us within the 72 hour deadline expiring on the afternoon of August 3 that they will lay down arms and that they will make a formal announcement to this effect at a public meeting on August 4. Under the terms of the accord, arms have to be surrendered to an authority designated by the President of Sri Lanka. On August 5, President Jayewardene designated General Attigalle, Defence Secretary of Sri Lanka and General Harkirat Singh, Commander of the Indian Forces in Jaffna as his designated authorities to receive the arms to be handed over by the militants. The same afternoon, the formal handing over ceremony took place and arms are now being deposited with the designated authorities at different collection centres. We expect this process to be completed within a few days.

As a further step in the reconciliation process. President Jayewardene has announced a general amnesty for all militants who lay down arms. This amnesty will also apply to those who are imprisoned and those who have been accused of militant activity under relevant Sri Lankan laws. We understand that the release orders for the first batch of 1000 political prisoners have already been signed. India has been

requested to help transport them by sea to Jaffna. This is being organized. Yesterday President Jayewardene announced his decision to set up single interim administration for the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The Sri Lanka Government has also requested our troops to assist in peace keeping functions and in ensuring handing over of arms in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. We will continue to monitor progress and to take timely action to implement the Agreement as per its provisions.

I am sure the House will agree with me that progress in the implementation of the agreement has been remarkable by any standards and better than most people would have expected. This has been the result of patient and sustained diplomatic efforts and a minute to minute monitoring of progress. I would like to pay a tribute to the wisdom, patience and far-signed statesmenship of President Jayewardene who has been steadfast in the resolve to implement the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement in letter and in spirit. I would also like to pay a tribute to the various Tamil groups and in particular to the LTTE and its leader, Shri Prabhakaran who, despite some major concerns and reservations, have placed their trust in India and their faith in the future and have decided to abide by the terms of the Agreement. They have done this in the interests of peace, security and prosperity of the people on whose behalf they had taken up arms in the first place. I would also like to pay a tribute to the highly profesional competence of our Armed Forces who have gone about their assigned task with processionalism, discipline and with a combination of fact and firmness. They are there as guests of the Sri Lankan Government and people, both Tamils and Sinhalese, and they have established excellent report with both the militants and the Sri Lankan security forces.

Last but not the least, I would like to mention that the vast majority of the people of Sri Lanka, both Sinhalese and Tamils, desire nothing but peace and harmony in their country. There has been an overwhelming sense of relief and joy among a vast majority of all sections of the Sri Lankan population at the prospect of peace and security after years of ethnic strife. I have no doubt that an equally vast majority of all communities would welcome this accord which brings peace, stability and progress to their country. I would like to conclude by reiterating the Government of India's determination to implement the accord in letter and in spirit and to cooperate fully with the Sri Lankan Government in this respect.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the Indo-Sri Lanka accord which was signed between our Hon. Prime Minister and His Excellency, President Jayewardene, is a landmark in the history of the world. This accord is not only saving the human race but it has raised the prestige of our country throughout the world.

Sir, this accord is welcomed by all the countries, including the superpower U.S.A. by President Reagan. Even the people of Sri Lanka have especially welcomed the accord and I have seen it yesterday on the TV that the people of Jaffna have started going back to their homes and they have started their new life. They have been suffering for the past four years and they have now started a new life. Even the LTTE leader, Mr. Prabhakaran who said that he has certain reservations on the Indo-Sri Lankan accord, has said: "Indian Government has given me an assurance that it will save Sri Lankan Tamils and, therefore, I agree for the accord." I would like to congratulate and thank our Indian Mission in Sri Lanka who were all involved in signing this accord, and especially our hon. Prime Minister

[Shri V. Narayanasamy]

who has taken interest to see that there is a settlement in Sri Lanka and to save the Indian Ocean from foreign aggression.

I have to ask for two clarifications from the hon. Minister. One is that in the year 1986, the Sri Lankan Government, finding that in the northern and eastern regions there are more Tamils and they were not in a position to control the situation in spite of the economic blockade, transported persons from other regions, that is, the people of Sinhalese population from other regions, to these areas. And in certain areas, the Sinhalese have now been living. I would like to know whether there was any discussion at the time of signing the accord, whether those Sinhalese will be taken back to their original places. They agreed to dismantle the army barracks and they have now started doing it in Jaffna region, and the militants have started coming back. It is a welcome measure because immediately after it was signed, the agreement has started working. The LTTE group and other persons have started surrendering arms. The Sri Lankan Government and also Mr. Jayewardene are very firm that this accord will be fully implemented, and he is cooperating with the Indian Government in this regard. I would like to know from the hon. Minister about the position of those persons who have been forcibly settled by the Sri Lankan authorities in Tamil regions, though they had been residing elsewhere.

My second point for clarification is, it is very well known that when our hon. Prime Minister went to Sri Lanka for signing this accord, conspicuously the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, the Internal Security Minister and some other Ministers did not join. They were also not party to this accord. I fully agree that this accord has to be implemented with full spirit and the terms of the accord have to be adhered to. But the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka has not whispered a word; he has not said anything. Though he is opposed to it, he has not said anything after the accord was signed. I feel, therefore that he will not agree to the terms of the accord, and being the Prime Minister of that country, if he does not cooperate with the Government, I doubt if the accord will be implemented by the Sri Lanka Government from their side.

Therefore, I would like to get these two clarifications from the hon. Minister.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, on behalf of All-India ADMK I express my happiness on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord. No doubt, there is a remarkable progress and an appreciable response from both sides. The hostile nations which conspired against India and tried to exploit the situation prevailing in Sri Lanka are now totally disappointed after seeing the tremendous impact of the accord among the Tamil people. Addressing a mammoth public meeting at Madras on the 2nd August, our hon. Prime Minister repeatedly assured the Tamils in Sri Lanka by saying—I quote—"The Sri Lankan Government has given us several assurances that the will not take advantage of the disarming of the militants". Because of the nature of these credible assurances and the accord thereon, our hon. Chief Minister, DR. M. G. R. appealed to the militant groups to honour the accord and surrender their weapons without any reservation. The earnest appeal of our Prime Minister and our hon. Chief Minister. Dr. M. G. R. has been duly honoured by all the militant groups including the major militant group, the L.T.T.E. Mr. Prabhakaran, the supreme commander of the L.T.T.E. has clearly

explained why they have agreed to surrender the weapons. He said:

*[I spoke to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India regarding your security and assurances there on. The Prime Minister of India gave us assurances. I have full faith on him and as such I trust his assurances. I hope the Government of India will not allow the Sri Lankan racist regime to continue the genocide of Tamils. Because of this faith we decided to surrender arms to the Indian Peace keeping forces.]

He has stated further *[For the sake of your freedom and security we are surrendering our arms. From the moment of surrendering our arms we also hand over to India the responsibility of protecting you all. As the Government of India takes the arms, the lone means of protection of Tamils so far, from us, it also undertakes the responsibility of protecting you from this moment. The surrender of arms means only the transfer of responsibility from one party to the other.]

These are his exact words. Right from the moment of the surrender of arms, we have undertaken the responsibility of protecting the Tamils. This has been clearly pointed out by Mr. Prabhakaran. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, as stated by my colleague, Mr. Narayanasamy, since there is a misunderstanding, a rift, in the Cabinet of Mr. Jayewardene, in case there is failure in the implementation of the agreement or if the Sri Lankan Government revives its attacks against Tamils, whether the Government of India will stand by its assurance as pointed out by Mr. Prabhakaran. Secondly, Sir, the accord is silent about the devolution of powers. Of course, there is an indication of date. Our hon. Prime Minister, durring his address in Madras, has clearly stated that the State to be constituted or formed in Sri Lanka would be equivalent to a State in India. But there is no indication in the accord whether the Government is going to be helpful in the establishment of such a State in Sri Lanka.

The third clarification I would like to seek from the hon. Minister is, owing to the brutality and barbarity of the Sri Lankan Army, since 1983, the total economy of the Tamils has been shattered and battered. Property worth more than thousand crores have been destroyed by the Sri Lankan Army. Several lakhs of families have been uprooted. In the accord there is a provision for rehabilitation of the militants. They are a few in number, a few thousands but the report is very silent about their rehabilitation and reconstruction of the economy. It requires a huge amount. Of course, our Government is liberal and kind enough in giving relief but apart from that for the reconstruction of the economy of Tamils who were affected by the brutality of the Sri Lankan Government, will the Government come forward to give grant and loan to the Government of Sri Lanka so as to help the affected Tamils?

Sir, before I conclude, one thing I have to put on record. By surrender ing the arms and honouring the accord reached between the Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka our Tamil militants in Sri Lanka have proved to the world that they are not terrorists, they were fighting for right and legitimate cause.

With this observation I conclude.

SHRI DARBARA SINGH (Punjab): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I would just say a few words. It is a happy occasion to congratulate the Prime Minister who has signed this agreement with Mr. Jayewardene, who has equally shown his wisdom about this agreement. The ethnic struggle that had been going on for a number of years, has come to an end. Therefore, it is a great success of the two great leaders of the two countries. We

*[ ]English translation of the Tamil quotation.

[Shri Darbara Singh]

equally appreciate the stand taken by Mr. Jayewardene who is ready to implement this accord. He has a strong desire to see that this trouble does not come up again. Some fears have been shown by my friend on the opposition. I think everything cannot be written explicitly in the accord but the assurance given by Mr. Jayewardene and the agreement arrived at by both the sides show it clearly that everything will be taken care of. There will be a democratic set-up in eastern and northern provinces of Sri Lanka where the Tamils are in large majority. So, we should not have doubts about that. I think Mr. Jayewardene is very much determined to implement the agreement *in toto*. So, it is a matter of great satisfaction. There is one more thing in the agreement which is very important and that is, no international power will be able to instal such annihilating arms that can destroy the whole of Asia. This aspect must also be taken into account at the time of looking into this agreement. I hope the accord will be implemented very amicably. It is one of the most important features and it has never happened in the history of the world.

So we all congratulate with one voice both the leaders of the two countries, especially our Prime Minister who has taken the initiative to enter into an agreement.

With these remarks, I once again appreciate and congratulate our Prime Minister and Mr. Jayewardene.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA (Gujarat): At the outset, I wholeheartedly congratulate our Prime Minister and also the President, Mr. Jayewardene, for this historical accord. I would not elaborate about other points, but I want to know one thing. It is being said that this accord has been acclaimed universally. I do not challenge this assertion but in the background of something that was said some months back I want one clarification. The Foreign Secretary had stated some months back that the CIA and other agencies are helping those forces in Sri Lanka which want to fight against the militants. Israel was also mentioned in this connection. Now how all of a sudden the U.S. Government is also acclaiming this Accord? Is it a diplmatic support or some such thing?

Prime Minister Premadasa of Sri Lanka and other Ministers are hostile to this Accord. They have made it known. Mr. Prabhakaran has also said that if required, he will again take up arms. In every settlement, in every accord, there is hope as well as some other issues involved. In such a situation, I would like to have a clarification from the hon. Minister as to how he would explain this complexity about the external powers' involvement as well as the complexities of an understanding coming between the agressive Sinhala elements as well as non-moderate forces from the Tamil side. How they will settle in future, kindly clarify on this point.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): At the outset I would also like to add my congratulations to the hon. Prime Minister of India and President Jayewardene of Sri Lanka for the tremendous statesmanship shown in going through with this historic Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement. I have read newspaper reports today that there have been some suggestions that both of them be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. I would like to say that in my opinion this would be a fitting recognition of the statesman like services rendered by them.

The hon. Member who spoke just before me was referring to the alleged involvement of the CIA, the Mossad and the Pakistanis against the Tamil militants' movement in Sri Lanka. The very fact that despite the complexities of the situation the super

powers and other alien agencies such as Mossad which were reputed to be involved, finally discovered that their efforts were useless and that Sri Lanka, under the leadership of President Jayewardene has discovered that the Indian Ocean has to remain a zone of peace for the security of this area, is something that we have to welcome as an achievement of statesmanship for which the initiative was taken by the Prime Minister of India. It is not an easy thing. The Psychological process involved in converting an armed movement into a peacetime political force needed to be tackled with considerable skill and finances and required time and energy.

There were times in this august House when accusations were hurled at this Government, when we were told "you are condoning, or you are standing as a spectator to genocide being committed on innocent Tamils of Sri Lanka and you should march an army into Sri Lanka". That would have been a very easy thing to do. It would also have been an easy thing to emulate the activities of agencies such as Mossad or other intelligence agencies that were supposed to be involved in these activities in Sri Lanka. But instead of doing all this, using diplomacy, using persuasive diplomacy, that we have come to such a tremendous agreement and our peacekeeping force is there at the request of the President of Sri Lanka and that we have brought this great ethnic conflict to a halt is a tribute to the foreign policy of this Government and I wish to say that this is unparalleled in the history of the foreign policy of India. Sir, I would like to quote from what has been stated in the House of Representatives in America just yesterday.

"Speaking in the House of Representatives yesterday, Mr. Dymally, Democratic Congressman from California, said 'it is a watershed agreement not only in South Asia but in the literature of international relations.'

'It is my fervent hope that this agreement will be an effective assurance that the human rights of the Tamil minority, long grossly abused, will at last be respected.'

Mr. Dymally praised Mr. Jayewardene for taking a 'great personal risk' and signing the agreement despite opposition from extremists in the Sinhalese community. He said Mr. Gandhi had also taken a great risk in concluding the agreement. 'This peace accord is a great testimony to his personal statesmanship which in my opinion should not go unrecognised by the United States Congress.' "

Imight add, Sir, it has not gone unrecognized by the whole world.

Sir, I would just like to seek two clarifications from the honourable Minister—and these have to do with the tremendous importance that has been attached to the letters that have been exchanged between the Prime Minister and President Jayewardene and to the great benefit for peace in the world, particularly in South Asia, that has been derived from these two letters. The decision of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jayewardene to "reach an early understanding about the relevance of employment of foreign military intelligence personnel with a view to ensuring that such presence, will not prejudice Indo-Sri Lankan relations or that Trincomalee or any other port in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use to any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests or that the work of restoring and operating the Trincomalee oil tank farm will be undertaken as a joint venture between India and Sri Lanka." These have truly important implications for this country and for peace in South Asia. Therefore, I would like to ask the honourable Minister whether as soon as the steps have been taken for total peace

[Shrimati Jayanthi Natarajan]

to be restored in the island of Sri Lanka, how soon will such an understanding be reached, and if any steps have been taken in that respect.

One last word, Sir. I would also like to urge that as far as reconstruction in Sri Lanka is concerned, perhaps the Government of India could take a very big initiative in setting aside as much financial assistance as possible to help the beleaguered people of Sri Lanka who have shown such bona fides to us.

Thank you.

PROF. CHANDRESH P. THAKUR (Bihar): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, let me record my appreciation at the outstanding achievement of our Prime Minister in skilfully engineering such an accord. It has brought peace and tranquillity not only to hundreds and thousands of Sri Lankan homes but it has also converted the South Asian region, which has been threatened with violence and turmoil for quite some time, into a zone of peace. I am sure the entire House will point me—just as my previous speakers have said—in congratulating our Prime Minister in particular, and also President Jayewardene, for this outsanding success.

A reference was made earlier by other Members that within the framework of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord there is a stipulation that external presences in Sri Lanka will cease, particularly those from Israel, Pakistan and the U.K., for the simple reason that their presences were not for the purposes towards which the accord is directed.

My clarification, Mr. Vice-Chairman, is on whether there is sufficient progress in the accomplishment of this process of exist, and if not, whether a systematic monitoring of progress in this regard is being maintained not only by a kind of Sri Lankan-Indian effort but whether this can even be extended through bilateral channels between India and the U.K., between India and Pakistan or, for that matter, through our third-country contacts, with Israel.

Thank you.

श्री कल्पनाथ राय (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, श्रीलंका और भारत के बीच जो समझौता हुआ है वह एक ऐतिहासिक समझौता है और देश की करोड़ों करोड़ जनता इस समझौते के साथ है। इस समझौते से जहां इंसानों का खून बह रहा था वहां शांति हुई है। हम, हमारे देश के श्री राजीव गांधी और लंका के राष्ट्रपति जयवर्धने को मुबारकबाद देना चाहते हैं कि इन दो लोगों के प्रयास से यह द्विपक्षीय समझौता सम्भव हो सका। यह समझौता हमारे नान-एलाइनमेंट मवमेंट के बहुत बड़ा विजय है। यह जो साउथ के देशों का नान-एलाइनमेंट मूवमेंट है यह विजय है इस मवमेंट का और बिना सुपर पावस के इंटरफेयरेंस के दो पड़ोसी राष्ट्रों ने यह समझौता किया। प्रधान मंत्री राजीव गांधी और श्री जयवर्धने को इस महान कार्य के लिये मानवता का नोबेल पीस प्राइज दिया जाना चाहिये। राजीव गांधी जी ने दुनियां के पैमाने पर शांति की राह दिखलाई है। जो रास्ता महात्मा गांधी ने, पंडित जवाहर लाल नेहरू ने, श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी ने आजादी की लड़ाई के दौरान दिखाया था, कि हिंदुस्तान की लड़ाई केवल हिंदुस्तान की सरहदों में नहीं होती बल्कि दुनिया में शांति और विकास के लिये हिंदुस्तान की आजादी की लड़ाई लड़ी जा रही है, उस उद्देश्य को राजीव गांधी जी ने पूरा किया है। एक बात मैं जरूर कहना चाहूंगा इस अवसर पर कि यह इतना बड़ा महान ऐतिहासिक काम हुआ है यह बंगलादेश की घटना से भी बड़ी ऐतिहासिक घटना है। लंका हिंदुस्तान का समझौता बंगादेश की जंग की विजय से भी बड़ा ऐतिहासिक समझौता है। आज सारे राष्ट्र को राजीव गांधी जी का अभिवादन करना चाहिये मगर यह महान दुख की बात है कि हमारे विरोधी दल के नेताओं को यहां भी टकराव की राजनीति दिखलाई दे रही है। सारे दुनियां में अमन शांति का जो चिराग राजीव गांधी जी ने जलाया है पूरे हिंदुस्तान की 75 करोड़ जनता

को और जनता के इन नुमाइंदों को जहां इस ऐतिहासिक उपलब्धि के लिये अभिवादन व अभिनन्दन करना चाहिये वहां विरोधी दलों का जो रवैया है वह जनतन्त्र का गला घोंटने वाला, शांति को खतरे में डालने वाला और दुनिया में साम्राज्यवाद ताकतों को मजबूत बनाने वाला कदम है। ऐसे घृणित राष्ट्र-घात और जनघात कार्यों के लिये विरोध दल की निन्दा की जानी चाहिये पूरे राष्ट्र के पैमाने पर और भारत के महान जनता को विश्व के इस ऐतिहासिक काम के लिये राजीव गांधी के हाथों को मजबूत बनाकर गांधी, नेहरू और इंदिरा गांधी के सपनों को साकार करना चाहिये।

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Sir, I am grateful to the distinguished hon. Members who have spoken—Shri Narayansamy, Shri Aladi Aruna, Shri Darbara Singh, Shri Chimanbhai Mehta, Shrimati Natarajan, Prof. Thakur and Shri Kalpnath Rai.

There is unanimity about the historic significance and importance of this agreement signed between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka, thus between the sovereign Governments of these two non-aligned countries. Both India and Sri Lanka have been Chairmen of the Non-alignment Movement. Here is a splendid example of two countries coming to an agreement of this import in this manner without any interference or undue interest by outside powers. As has been mentioned by all the Members who spoke, there are unique features in this agreement. These have been highlighted in the statement made here and in the statement that the Prime Minister made in this House and in the other House and also in the statement that I, in my humble capacity, made in both the Houses of Parliament.

Sir, on an occasion like this, one should look to the future, and not to the past. I would therefore, not respond to some of the things that have been said about what happened in Sri Lanka in the past. We are aware of it. It is a tragic chapter, and it is great relief that this sad chapter is behind us and a new dawn is before us, and we should take advantage of this. The climate, the atmosphere that has been created by the signing of this agreement is propitious, and no opportunity should be missed to make it a success. We have been encouraged by the developments of the last week. The time-table mentioned in the Agreement is being kept and it is quite remarkable. Bearing in mind the past conflict and bitterness, the way the Agreement is being implemented is very heartwarming. Here I would like to congratulate the Sri Lankan authorities, our own people there, Mr. Prabhakaran and his colleagues and the other groups. I would also request hon. Members to carefully read the text of the Agreement and also the letters exchanged between the Prime Minister of India and th President of Sri Lanka. If they read them carefully, then various doubts that they have exhibited here will disappear. Now, Articles 2(4), 2(11) and 2(17) take care of some of the queries that were raised here. There is a provision in the Agreement that if there are residuary problems which are not specifically mentioned here, these can be resolved in the next six months by discussions between the two Governments.

1 P.M.

We are monitoring the implementation of the Agreement almost hourly. We are in touch with our High Commission in Sri Lanka, with our military personnel in Sri Lanka and with the Sri Lankan authorities. This is as good an agreement as has ever been reached between two countries, if not better. I do not want to indulge in an exercise of self-congratulation, but having been a professional diplomat in my adult life, I do feel proud of the fact that an agreement of this kind has been signed between Sri Lanka and India. We looked at our Archives and do not find any parallel of this kind. What I want to emphasise is that for the implementation we will need all the goodwill, perseverance and patience

[Shri K. Natwar Singh]

that has gone into making this a reality. Therefore, I am most heartened by the sentiments expressed by the hon. Members and the support that they have given to the Goevrnment of India and for the recognition that they have given to the Government and the President of Sri Lanka because without his efforts and without what he has done in his own country it would not have been possible for us to arrive at this Agreement.

I do not wish to comment on observations made by hon. Members about the dissensions within the Sri Lankan establishment. This is not our job to do so. We have signed an agreement with the Head of State of the Government of Sri Lanka and that is what matters.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, the hon. Minister has not answered our questions. Tamil militants have surrendered their weapons. Now they are unarmed. In that case if there is an attack from the Sri Lankan Government, will the Government of India stand by its assurance? We want to have an answer on that point.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: This Agreement has been guaranteed and underwritten by the Government of India. I am not visualising the kind of eventuality that you have in mind. I hope this does not happen. If this happens, then there is a mechanism available to the Government of India and Sri Lanka to contain it. If you read the Agreement, there is a provision in it as to how these people are to be rehabilitated and how they are to be looked after. Now, suppose there is an incident, our troops are available there. They are a guarantee and an assurance that no provision of the Agreement is violated. President Jayewardene yesterday has announced the formation of an interim administration. Now, the Tamil Militants who have given up their arms voluntarily, will, I certainly hope, participate in the interim administration of these two territories. If that happens, then they will be governing it themselves. Then the fear in our mind will not arise.

TRE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Shri B. K. Gadhvi to lay papers on the Table.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE—contd.

Notifications of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) and related papers.

SHRI B. K. GADHVI: Sir, I also beg to lay on the Table, under section 159 of the Customs Act, 1962, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following notifications of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) together with an Explanatory Memorandum thereon:—

(i) Notification No. 285|87-Customs, dt. the 7th August, 1987, seeking to exempt synthetic tracks and artificial surfaces imported under the "Scheme for Laying Synthetic Tracks and Artificial Surfaces" of the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, from the whole of the basic and additional duties of customs leviable thereon [Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-4577|87].

(ii) Notification No. 286|87-Customs, dt. the 7th August, 1987, seeking to exempt the goods covered by Notification No. 285-87-Customs, dt. the 7th August, 1987 from the whole of the auxiliary duty of customs leviable thereon. [Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-4577|87].